

Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) is a partnership of the City of San Jose, San Jose Redevelopment Agency, and the community to build clean, safe, and attractive neighborhoods with independent and capable neighborhood organizations.

The City and Redevelopment Agency have committed funds to the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative effort, and this planning process is an outgrowth of that commitment. This planning study concerns the 13th Street Neighborhood, which is comprised of areas represented by four neighborhood associations: Northside Neighborhood, Hensley Historic District, Julian/St. James, and Horace Mann.



Figure 1.1
San Jose / Bay Area Context

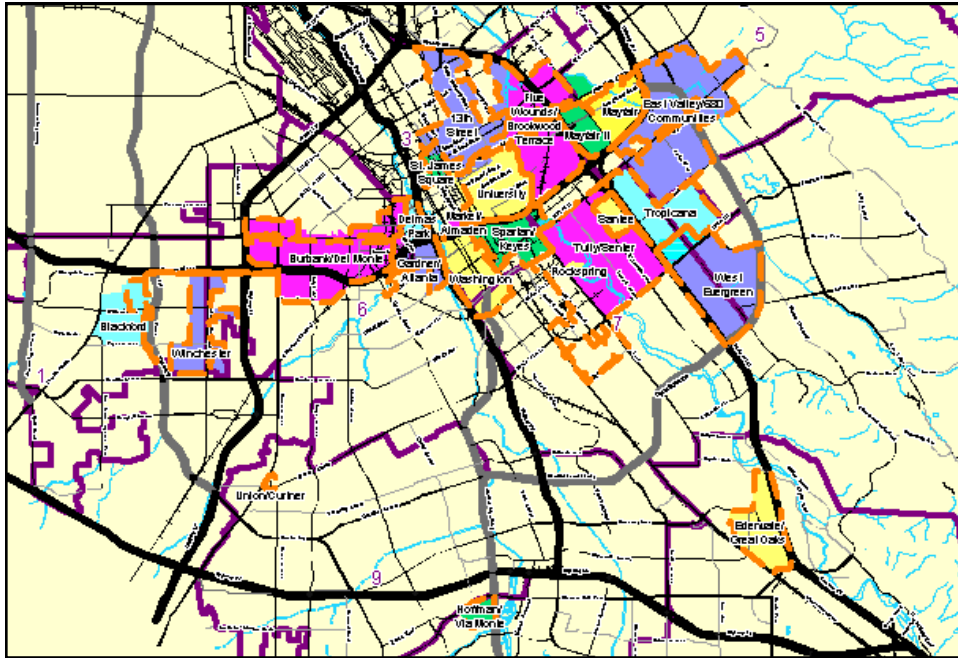


Figure 1.2
13th Street Area and other SNI Areas

This Thirteenth Street Neighborhood Improvement Plan is one of 22 plans being prepared or updated as the first step in the Strong Neighborhood Initiative process. Ultimately, all of these plan areas will be included in a single Redevelopment Project Area, and thus will become eligible for Redevelopment Agency and other funding and programs for neighborhood improvements. This Plan documents the community's objectives and priorities and provides guidance to the City, Redevelopment Agency and neighborhood stakeholders for implementation.

A Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) of approximately 25 members was appointed by Councilperson Cindy Chavez to represent the neighborhood in this planning process. Beginning in late summer 2000, the NAC began meeting to discuss concepts for the future of the neighborhood. Through over a dozen meetings of the NAC and three area-wide community meetings, the plan took shape. Aided by BMS Design Group (consulting planners and designers) and City staff, the NAC articulated their goals, visions and ideas for the future of the neighborhood.



Figure 1.3
13th Street Neighborhood Area

Plan Organization

This plan for the 13th Street Neighborhood has several components:

Background: This first section of the report briefly describes some key characteristics of the neighborhood.

Community Vision and Goals: The NAC with the input of the wider community discussed at length a vision and a set of goals and objectives for this plan. These have guided the development of plan elements, and serve as an evaluation tool for the importance and priority of the various proposals made in this plan.

Improvement Concepts: This section includes all of the plan proposals for the 13th Street Neighborhood. These range from traffic and parking measures, to street tree planting programs, to potential private sector development projects for specific sites. This chapter includes three elements: Conservation and Development, Circulation and Public Environment.

Action Plan: This plan element reflects the issues and needs described in the Improvement Concepts Chapter, and translates them into individual “action items.” Action items are discrete, feasible activities that, alone or in combination with other action items, will implement or achieve the community’s goals and objectives. The Action Plan consists of detailed descriptions of the action items that are the community’s top ten priorities, plus a matrix which includes all of the community’s action items, with priorities, responsibilities, costs where possible and potential funding sources identified. The Action Plan will be the blueprint for decision-makers, community organizations and individuals to implement the community’s concepts for the 13th Street community.

Planning Process

The planning process for the 13th Street Neighborhood Revitalization Plan was dependent upon the hard work and commitment of the NAC and community. During a period of nearly one year, neighborhood residents, business owners, tenants, and property owners participated in discussions and work sessions designed to articulate goals, priorities and actions aimed at the overall improvement of the 13th Street neighborhood.

Included in the process were:

NAC Meetings

The NAC met over a dozen times, generally once a month, to discuss the neighborhood. Among the topics discussed were:

- Neighborhood Assets, Issues and Opportunities
- Goals for the Future of the 13th Street Neighborhood
- Specific Ideas for Improvements
- Plans and Programs
- Action Plans and Strategies

The NAC meetings included round table discussions, visioning sessions on several topics and subareas of the plan, and also provided a forum for City staff and representatives of agencies such as the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to come and brief the community about ongoing plans and programs.



Figure 1.4
NAC Meetings

Community Meetings

Three community meetings were held to gain insights into the issues and thoughts of the broader community. These meetings were conducted in a participatory format to allow community members opportunities to express their views on many of the same issues that were raised and discussed by the NAC. These meetings were very well attended, with an average of 70 people at each; Mayor Ron Gonzales attended and participated in the second of these meetings, and Councilperson Cindy Chavez or her staff were participants in all meetings.



Figure 1.5
Community Meetings

Ongoing Outreach

Throughout the planning process various City staff, particularly with Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, as well as those with the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Redevelopment Agency, San Jose Police, and Department of Transportation provided ongoing information and support to community members in response to concerns and issues raised in meetings. This outreach lays an important foundation for the future implementation of the plan in the months and years to come.